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ABSTRACT

Teaching critical thinking is difficult in elementary music instruction because of the limited time devoted to music; yet it must be considered a vital part of music instruction, as students must not only become knowledgeable about music, but should also learn to think intelligently about music. Recommendations for the content of elementary music curricula are provided, which draw heavily from the Music Educators' National Conference (MENC), supplemented by several school music curriculum guides and texts. A major factor influencing the extent and quality of elementary music instruction in the future will be the financial support of the schools. It is hoped that music programs will have a more central role in the total curriculum. Broad goals are set, and eight critical thinking skills (focusing, information gathering, remembering, organizing, analyzing, generating, integrating, and evaluating) are discussed in light of those goals. The recommended content is considered both from the point of view of minimal instruction by a classroom teacher and instruction 3 to 5 days a week by a music specialist. Recommended teacher competencies drawn from MENC and the author's expertise in music teacher training are discussed. An appendix gives a detailed analysis of a general music lesson indicating how a topic can be taught using critical thinking skills. A 26-item bibliography concludes the document. (JB)

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Elementary Subjects Center
Series No. 4

ELEMENTARY GENERAL MUSIC: A DISCIPLINE-BASED REVIEW

Robert L. Erbes

Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects

Institute for Research on Teaching

College of Education

Michigan State University

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Robert L. Erbes

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Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects

The **Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects** was awarded to Michigan State University in 1987 after a nationwide competition. Funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, the Elementary Subjects Center is a major project housed in the Institute for Research on Teaching (IRT). The program focuses on conceptual understanding, higher order thinking, and problem solving in elementary school teaching of mathematics, science, social studies, literature, and the arts. Center researchers are identifying exemplary curriculum, instruction, and evaluation practices in the teaching of these school subjects; studying these practices to build new hypotheses about how the effectiveness of elementary schools can be improved; testing these hypotheses through school-based research; and making specific recommendations for the improvement of school policies, instructional materials, assessment procedures, and teaching practices. Research questions include, What content should be taught when teaching for conceptual understanding and higher level learning? How do teachers concentrate their teaching to use their limited resources best? and In what ways is good teaching subject matter-specific?

The work is designed to unfold in three phases, beginning with literature review and interview studies designed to elicit and synthesize the points of view of various stakeholders (representatives of the underlying academic disciplines, intellectual leaders and organizations concerned with curriculum and instruction in school subjects, classroom teachers, state- and district-level policymakers) concerning ideal curriculum, instruction, and evaluation practices in these five content areas at the elementary level. Phase II involves interview and observation methods designed to describe current practice, and in particular, best practice as observed in the classrooms of teachers believed to be outstanding. Phase II also involves analysis of curricula (both widely used curriculum series and distinctive curricula developed with special emphasis on conceptual understanding and higher order applications), as another approach to gathering information about current practices. In Phase III, test models of ideal practice will be developed based on what has been learned and synthesized from the first two phases.

The findings of Center research are published by the IRT in the Elementary Subjects Center Series. Information about the Center is included in the IRT Communication Quarterly (a newsletter for practitioners) and in lists and catalogs of IRT publications. For more information, to receive a list or catalog, or to be placed on the IRT mailing list to receive the newsletter, please write to the Editor, Institute for Research on Teaching, 252 Erickson Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan 48824-1034.

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Abstract

The author reviews the nature of higher order thinking by comparing the concepts of creative thinking and critical thinking. Teaching critical thinking is difficult in elementary music instruction because of the limited time devoted to music; yet it must be considered a vital part of music instruction. Recommendations for the content of elementary music draw heavily from the Music Educators National Conference (MENC), the profession's national organization. This is supplemented with recommendations from several school music curriculum guides and texts. A major influence on the extent and quality of elementary music content and instruction in the future will be the financial support of the schools.

Music should continue to be treated as an art and students must not only become knowledgeable about music, but also learn to think intelligently about music. For K-6 music programs the author bases his recommendations not only on music content but on how the teaching of higher order thinking can be integrated in elementary music through the selection of musical topics. The content is considered both from the point of view of minimal instruction by the classroom teacher and instruction three to five days a week by a music specialist. Music teacher competencies draw on the recommendations of the MENC and the author's expertise in music teacher training. An appendix gives a detailed analysis of a typical general music lesson: learning to recognize the instruments of the band and orchestra and how this could be taught using a core thinking skill, information gathering.

ELEMENTARY GENERAL MUSIC: A DISCIPLINE-BASED REVIEW

Robert L. Erbes*

This is one of a series of eight reports being prepared for Study 2 of Phase I of the research agenda of the Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects. Phase I calls for surveying and synthesizing the opinions of various categories of experts concerning the nature of elementary-level instruction in mathematics, science, social studies, literature, and the arts, with particular attention to how teaching for understanding and problem solving should be handled within such instruction. Michigan State University faculty who have made important contributions to their own disciplines were invited to become Board of Discipline members and to prepare papers describing historical developments and current thinking in their respective disciplines concerning what ought to be included in the elementary school curriculum. These papers include a sociohistorical analysis of how the discipline should be represented as an elementary school subject, what content should be taught, and the nature of the higher level thinking and problem solving outcomes that should be assessed. This paper focuses on the discipline of music; the other seven papers focus on the disciplines of mathematics, science, political science, geography, history, literature, and art.

Current Reforms

The fifth anniversary of the publication, A Nation at Risk, marked the beginning of an important period of educational reform in the U.S. Many educators still do not agree that A Nation at Risk agenda was correct, but five

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*Robert Erbes, professor of music and area chairperson of Music Education at Michigan State University, is on the Board of Disciplines of the Center for the Learning and Teaching of Elementary Subjects.

years later they generally praise the report for the impetus it provided for badly needed reform. Ernest Boyer has credited the report with generating, "five years of the most sustained commitment to education improvement that we have had in our history."[1] In light of the reform movement, little mention has been made about the arts and specifically, the curriculum and instruction of elementary general music. The general tone of the various educational reform recommendations have, in a sense, been conservative and directed at improving "basic" education. A concern now surfacing is the emphasis reform places on improved student performance and higher test scores, but in an increasingly complex society on the brink of the twenty-first century, is only performance sufficient? Should not the learning of facts and skills be balanced with teaching students how to use their minds? In its 1988 series, An Education for Life, the Foundation for the Advancement of Education in Music states:[2]

> In a world of passive entertainment, an active mind is something to be treasured. But without the training that mental engagement offers, using our minds independently and creatively only becomes more difficult. One reason the study of music is so valuable is that it challenges the mind by requiring critical thinking, problem solving, and the ability to conceptualize abstract ideas.

Overview of Past and Current Trends in Elementary General Music

Historical Antecedents

Since the roots of American music education in the early eighteenth century, elementary general music instruction has been at the core of our music curriculum. Many have criticized the nature of general music as emphasizing performance, rote learning, and the passive participation in musical activities. Lowell Mason's beliefs, dating back to the 1830s, that music learning should occur through activities of observation, judgment, and decision making as a means of arriving at conclusions was not a focus of nineteenth and early twentieth century music instruction. During that period, these outcomes

for a musical education were lost in the early evolvement of elementary music instruction. The first dramatic change in music education was the result of the progressive education movement of the early twentieth century. This trend exerted a marked influence on materials and curricula in the 1930s and 1940s. After World War II, the belief in children's self-expression led to a more creative and less passive involvement in music. This was evident in the development of activities involving playing instruments, moving to music, and creating music.

As a result of the events of the Sputnik era in the late 1950s, our nation began to question its educational "softness." This led to a change in education philosophy. During this period the American Association of School Administrators and the National Education Association recommended that creative and independent thinking should be a focus of instruction and the arts must be a part of a balanced curriculum.

Following the social and political upheaval of the early 1960s, a new thrust in higher order thinking and learning led by the work of Bruner and Piaget began to influence the music curriculum. The publications and influences resulting from the Tanglewood Symposium of 1967, the Music Educators National Conference (MENC) GO (Goals and Objectives) Project, and the three Ann Arbor Symposia of the late 1970s and early 1980s focused the profession's interest on the processes of learning in music and the need for stimulating instructional and motivational techniques. Several articles in the recent issues of the Music Educators Journal and the "Dimensions of Thinking" sessions at the 1988 MENC Inservice Conference continue to attract the attention of music educators to the need for higher order thinking in music education.

Elementary music, as we presently know it, seems to be in a phase in which the major approaches to its curricula--Orff, Kodaly, Dalcroze, and Gordon are

being refined and modified. Before continuing, a brief description of these methods is perhaps necessary. Carl Orff, a German, felt that the teacher must provide the child, through exploration and experience, with a variety of musical activities supplemented by performance with Orff percussion instruments and recorder. His "Schulwerk" concept features musical learning through movement, speech, improvisation, and creative play. The Hungarian, Zoltan Kodaly, developed techniques to improve the musical education of his nation's children. American music education has retained many of these techniques including singing, hand signs to aid music reading, and a rhythmic system of mnemonic syllables. The sequence of activities is drawn from and closely related to child development.

Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, a Professor of Music at the Geneva, Switzerland, Conservatory of Music, believed that bodily movement, improvisation, and syllable singing was an aid to music reading. He maintained that movement to music was the most direct approach to rhythmic response and musical understanding. The American, Edwin Gordon, has developed a prescribed learning sequence in music specifically for young children. The system adheres to the sound-before-sight principle. The ability to hear music with understanding and a grasp of tonality and meter prepares the child to become a capable music reader.

The first three--Orff, Kodaly, and Dalcroze--have been infused into our music programs for several years. Nationally, there is no one prevalent method, but as the elementary music program has gone through this phase of refinement, it seems that these major approaches have been tried and studied for a period of several years. The lines are blurring now between these as the best of each is integrated into a truly "American" elementary music curriculum. Music educators should, however, step back and determine if the variety of delivery

systems inherent in these methods has led to confusion and distractions for our students. As the curriculum in the next decade is further refined, attention must be given to a cohesive and quality method that includes attention to higher order thinking skills.

The Nature of Higher Order Thinking

When studying the process of thinking, terminology can quickly become confusing. Within the realm of higher order thinking, two types of processes are most common, critical and creative thinking. The type of thinking to be encouraged in our curriculum and instruction is best termed "critical thinking." The use of "creative thinking" is easily confused with the critical process. In Dimensions of Thinking, critical thinking is defined as primarily evaluative and creative thinking as a more generative process.[3] These two forms are not really opposite, but tend to complement each other in any effective thought process. In short, critical thinking is involved when a student carefully analyzes arguments, obtains valid evidence, and reaches a sound conclusion. This process, as it should be used in our teaching, produces students who are objective and work in an accurate and thoughtful manner. To assist the reader in further understanding critical thinking, Ennis lists several important dispositions of critical thinking:[4]

* Seek a clear statement of the thesis or questions.
* Seek reasons.
* Try to be well informed.
* Use and mention credible sources.
* Consider the total situation.
* Try to remain relevant to the main point.
* Keep in mind the original or basic concern.
* Look for alternatives.
* Be open-minded.
* Take a position (and change a position) when the evidence and reasons are sufficient to do so.
* Seek as much precision as the subject permits.
* Deal in an orderly manner with the parts of a complex whole.

* Be sensitive to others' feelings, level of knowledge, and degree of sophistication.
* Use one's critical thinking abilities.

It is not the intent of this paper to discuss the teaching of creative thinking, but attention should be given to this process as it pertains to music instruction. Critical thinking can be characterized as being an intensive process, but in creative thought, one must step back from the environment to permit thought that is free and flexible. Intrinsic motivation is a factor that drives creative thought and is evident in the inner drive to succeed and feel self-satisfaction from the act of performing music.

Critical Thinking in General Music

The blending of the elementary music curriculum and the teaching of critical thinking skills cannot be easily accomplished. Too often the tendency of teachers is to "teach as they were taught," a certain inhibition to trying new instructional techniques. Unfortunately, many musical experiences were learned in a classroom or rehearsal in a very direct, straightforward manner--one which did not foster critical thinking. Another potential roadblock suggested by many teachers is the limited time available to accomplish the curriculum in even a marginal manner. One or two classes a week often represents the minimal time to complete the task at hand. The teaching of critical thinking, in contrast, takes time to accomplish.

With the limited time available for music instruction, teachers must make the most effective use of their contact time. The most efficient modes of teaching are often product-oriented, but as teachers we must constantly remind ourselves to consider the total educational "picture." Are we not helping the majority of our students become appreciators and consumers of music in later life? Granted, they should know the facts associated with a music education but, of even more importance, will they know how to analyze and understand the

music they will hear and participate in as adults? As general music students, are they learning to use their minds? The introduction of higher order thinking would seem best suited to achieving our total education picture. In John Goodlad's A Place Called School, he frequently points out that students are seldom asked to express ideas let alone offer an opinion in class.[5] As music educators we cannot adopt an attitude of "keep quiet, we have to get through this lesson today."

The Content of the Elementary General Music Program

The diversity of content of our nation's elementary general music programs varies considerably from state to state and region to region. During periods of economic recession, many school systems reduce their art and music staffs. Where music is taught by classroom teachers rather than music specialists, little content is taught. In school systems with a complete staff and adequate scheduled time, considerable content is covered. To delineate the "core" content for this paper, I have drawn on the publications of the Music Educators National Conference, curriculum guides from several school systems, and texts in the field of elementary general music methodology. The section is to be divided into three areas: broad outcomes for a musical education at all levels, broad grade level outcomes, and specific content for the levels of kindergarten, grades 1-3, and grades 4-6.

Broad Outcomes

The MENC, in its publication, the School Music Program: Description and Standards, describes the broad outcomes recommended for a musical education.[6] It states that children:

1. are able to make music, alone and with others;
2. are able to improvise and create music;
3. are able to use the vocabulary and notation of music;

4. are able to respond to music aesthetically, intellectually, and emotionally;
5. are acquainted with a wide variety of music, including diverse musical styles and genres;
6. understand the role music has played and continues to play in the lives of human beings;
7. are able to make aesthetic judgments based on critical listening and analysis;
8. have developed a commitment to music;
9. support the musical life of the community and encourage others to do so; and
10. are able to continue their musical learning independently.

Grade Level Outcomes (K)

For kindergarten, appropriate musical activities should include group and some individual experiences. Group singing and instrumental performance are recommended. As individuals, the children should have the opportunity to try simple vocal experiences, movement to music, and creative activities.

Grade Level Outcomes (1-3)

In the lower elementary grades (1-3), music activities must build and refine the first experiences of kindergarten. More sophisticated listening involving aural recognition should supplement the normal group and individual singing experiences. Creative activities should now involve improvisation and dramatization of music.

Grade Level Outcomes (4-6)

Upper grade level (4-6) music should permit the child to develop more musical independence through individual singing, creating, and performing. Listening skills should include the ability to differentiate between musical forms and styles and the development of a repertoire of standard musical compositions. Throughout all grades K-6, the students must be given the opportunity to think and verbalize about music.

Specific Content

The content listed in Table 1 is recommended for each general grade level by the Music Educators National Conference.

Content across grade levels. In summarizing the content emphasis across grade levels, the most marked contrast is that from lower elementary (1-3) to upper elementary (4-6). In the earlier grades the emphasis is on group activities to help build student confidence as well as competence. The shift in the upper grades, even though group activities are still vitally important, is to more individual experiences, exploration, and creativity. The intent of listening skills is to require more aural discrimination by the student. In many school systems, upper grade content leading to beginning instrumental experiences and choral activities is seen at grades four, five, or six.

Content across students. In developing curricula and materials in elementary general music, the emphasis has been to broaden these to meet a diversity of students. This concern has been recognized by the MENC and the classroom music series produced by several major publishing houses. Materials aimed at the Black and Hispanic cultures have long been a vital part of our instruction. Music of the various Asian cultures is now being added to many textbook series. One should be aware, however, that materials and publications have gone beyond the cultures above to include music of Africa, Europe, and the Asian continent. The uniqueness that jazz has played in our own American musical culture is also a vital part of the curriculum. In short, a serious effort has been made, and is continuing, to supplement the masterpieces of great music and American folk music with the music of all cultures.

Table 1

Content Recommended by Music Educators National Conference

AGES 4-5. By the completion of kindergarten children are able to:

Performing/Reading

1. Utilize the singing voice, as distinct from the speaking voice.
2. Match pitches and sing in tune within their own ranges most of the time.
3. Show an awareness of beat, tempo (e.g. fast-slow), dynamics (e.g. loud-soft), pitch (e.g. high-low), and similar and different phrases through movement and through playing classroom instruments.
4. Enjoy singing nonsense songs, folk songs, and song games.
5. Utilize pictures, geometric shapes, and other symbols to represent pitch, durational patterns, and simple forms.

Creating

1. Explore sound patterns on classroom instruments.
2. Improvise songs spontaneously during many classroom and playtime activities.
3. Complete "answers" to unfinished melodic phrases by singing or playing instruments.
4. Express ideas or moods using instruments and environmental or body sounds.

Listening/Describing

1. Give attention to short musical selections.
2. Listen attentively to an expanded repertoire of music.
3. Respond to musical elements (e.g. pitch, duration, loudness) and musical styles (e.g., march, lullaby) through movement or through playing classroom instruments.
4. Describe with movement or language similarities and differences in music such as loud-soft, fast-low, up-down-same, smooth-jumpy, short-long and similar-contrasting.
5. Classify classroom instruments and some traditional instruments by shape, size, pitch, and tone quality.
6. Use a simple vocabulary of music terms to describe sounds.

Valuing

1. Demonstrate an awareness of music as a part of everyday life.
2. Enjoy singing, moving to music, and playing instruments alone and with others.
3. Respect music and musicians.

GRADES 1-3. By the completion of the third grade, students are able to:

Performing/Reading

1. Sing in tune alone or with a group using a clear, free tone.
2. Sing from memory a repertoire of folk and composed songs.
3. Sing with appropriate musical expression.
4. Respond to the beat in music by clapping, walking, running, or skipping.
5. Play simple pitch patterns on melodic instruments such as bells or xylophones.
6. Play simple rhythmic patterns on classroom percussion instruments to accompany songs and rhythm activities.
7. Sing a simple ostinato[a] with a familiar song.
8. Interpret the basic notational symbols for rhythm patterns, including quarter, eighth, and half notes and rests, by engaging in appropriate movement, such clapping or walking, playing on classroom instruments, or chanting.
9. Recognize the basic features (e.g., form, melodic contour, expressive qualities) of unfamiliar songs by studying their notation.
10. Use correct notational symbols for pitch and expression.
11. Use a system (e.g., syllables, numbers, letters) for reading notation.

Creating

1. Create "answers" to unfinished melodic phrases by singing or playing on classroom instruments.
2. Create short melodic patterns on classroom instruments or by singing.
3. Improvise songs and accompaniments to physical movement using classroom instruments.
4. Create short pieces consisting of nontraditional sounds available in the classroom or with the body (e.g. snapping fingers, rubbing fingers on a table top).
5. Create, in class, new stanzas to familiar melodies.
6. Dramatize songs and stories.

Listening/Describing

1. Recognize aurally the difference between long and short sounds, repeated and contrasting phrases, slow and fast tempos, duple and triple meters, major and minor modes, and other contrasting sound patterns.
2. Indicate aural recognition of high and low pitches by making directional hand movements that follow the pitch of a melodic line.
3. Recognize aurally the timbre of basic wind, string, and percussion instruments.
4. Describe in simple terms the stylistic characteristics of some of the music they sing or listen to.
5. Use musical terms and concepts to express thoughts about music (e.g. loud, short, high, melody, rhythm).

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[a]A repeated musical figure (melodic or rhythmic) played as an accompaniment to a song or chant.

6. Use hand motions and other body movements or graphic designs to indicate how portions of a musical work sound.
7. Identify the patterns of simple forms (e.g. AB, ABA).

Valuing
1. Realize that music is an important part of everyday life.
2. Feel a sense of respect for music and its performance and creation.
3. Display a sense of enjoyment when participating in music.
4. Use music as a means of personal expression.

GRADES 4-6. By the completion of the grade 6, students are able to:

Performing/Reading
1. Sings songs accurately and independently, reflecting an understanding of tonal and rhythmic elements.
2. Control their voices in order to produce the desired musical quality to communicate expressive intent.
3. Perform basic tonal patterns, rhythm patterns, and simple songs on recorder, keyboard, electronic synthesizer, and other classroom instruments.
4. Provide choral accompaniments with instruments such as guitar and autoharp-type instruments.
5. Conduct songs in 2-, 3-, and 4-beat meter.
6. Sing one part alone or in a small group while others sing contrasting parts.
7. Sing harmonizing parts in thirds and sixths.
8. Perform simple accompaniments by ear.
9. Recognize tonal and rhythm patterns and musical forms from examining the notation.
10. Continue the use of a systematic approach to music reading.
11. Demonstrate growth in the ability to sing or play music from notation.

Creating
1. Make thoughtful alterations and variations in existing songs.
2. Improvise simple ostinato-like accompaniments on pitched instruments.
3. Improvise rhythmic accompaniments for songs.
4. Create simple descants, introductions, and codas.
5. Experiment with variations in tempo. timbre, dynamics, and phrasing for expressive purposes.
6. Utilize diverse sound sources, including electronic, when improvising or composing.

Listening/Describing
1. Listen to and demonstrate an understanding of rhythm by responding physically or with the use of rhythm instruments.
2. Notate correctly simple pitch and rhythm patterns presented aurally.
3. Identify by listening a basic repertoire of standard orchestral and vocal compositions.
4. Use correct terminology to discuss the characteristics of a work, including melody, rhythm, meter, key, form, expressive qualities, and style.

5. Discuss in their own words the qualities of a work of music.
6. Identify by listening: Most orchestral instruments and classifications of voices; formal patterns such as AB, ABA, rondo, and theme and variations, salient musical features such as tempo, dynamic level, major and minor modes, meter, counterpoint; and types of music (e.g. electronic, folk, orchestral, jazz, choral).

Valuing

1. Demonstrate an increased awareness of music as an important part of everyday life.
2. Participate in music through singing and playing instruments.
3. Enjoy listening to most types of music.
4. Discuss personal responses to works of art.
5. Describe the musical phenomena on which their observations are based.

Source: Music Educators National Conference, The School Music Program: Description and Standards (Reston, VA: MENC, 1986), pp. 19, 22, 23.

Future Trends in Elementary General Music

Any predictions about future content trends are difficult to make. As mentioned earlier in this paper, the various influences on the curriculum of the 1980s have created a period of refinement and development. Future events that could provide an impetus for the elementary music curriculum are improved funding for schools and a return to an educational program that is centered in the humanities. Throughout the past several decades, these have been the factors that influenced the place of the arts in the elementary school.

Given these trends, one would hope that the elementary music program would have a more central role in the total curriculum rather than being thought of as a "frill." The use of masterpieces and folk music in both the publications and teacher made materials must be at the core of any future curriculum. Music of the nation's minorities and that of other cultures and nations must constantly supplement these masterpieces. We must now begin to integrate the electronic media (computers, electronic keyboards, synthesizers, videodisc, etc.) into our instruction. These tools can provide the teacher with a valuable aid in their instructional duties.

Lastly, the instruction of music must be continued to be treated as an art, not as a static, uncreative endeavor. These techniques will assist our students to not only become knowledgeable, intelligent musicians, but also students who will think about music and its value in enhancing their lives.

Recommendations for K-6 Elementary Music Curriculum

Breadth vs. Depth Issue

In studying and thinking about the breadth vs. depth issue in music instruction K-6, it seems that the curriculum should consciously approach it from the view that lower grades (K-3) instruction should develop a breadth of

content and depth should then become the goal of the upper grades (4-6). Some curricular materials and elementary music textbook series do attempt to sequence content in this manner. The lower grades present the teacher with the opportunity to develop positive attitudes and interest towards music, a goal for which a variety of materials and activities can provide impetus. As mentioned earlier in this paper, this level also is the optimum time to build the musical confidence of children.

As the child moves to the upper grade levels, the opportunity is presented to develop more depth of content, to specialize, and above all, to begin to develop higher order thinking skills. These skills should not be ignored in the lower grade program, however. Simple activities involving problem solving, organizing, and evaluating, for example, can be used in enhancing instruction at this level.

Goals for a Musical Education

The terminal goals for K-6 musical education can be best summarized in the following broad goals:

1. Knowledge - Children must obtain the basic knowledge through musical education K-6 that will permit them not only to understand the concepts and principles that are components of the art of music, but also to provide a basis for musical participation and appreciation as an adolescent and adult.
2. Skills - Children must obtain the basic skills of music (reading, singing, movement, and performing) that can provide the basis for musical performance at the secondary levels and perhaps in adult life.
3. Attitudes - Children must develop a positive attitude toward the art of music of all cultures and nations and have the desire to

participate further in musical activities as a performer and/or consumer throughout their lives.

As a part of these broad goals for a musical education, one should also consider the general goals for developing students' higher order thinking skills. In studying the literature in the field of thinking, I found many excellent sources. One publication, Dimensions of Thinking will serve as a basis for the author's discussion of this topic. In this excellent book, eight core skills vital to the process of higher order thinking are discussed:[7]

* Focusing
* Information Gathering
* Remembering
* Organizing
* Analyzing
* Generating
* Integrating
* Evaluating

In the following section, I summarize each briefly in light of elementary music instruction:

1. Focusing Skills - This skill pertains to the ability to determine which information is important and what is not important. The skill may be a part of many thinking strategies as the student determines what is necessary to accomplish a task. This skill can be a part of several musical activities including simple harmonization of melodies, musical analyses, categorizing musical examples, and creative activities.
2. Information-Gathering Skills - This involves the drawing upon information already mentally stored or newly obtained that will assist a student with learning. This skill plays a major role in the art of music. Students hear music constantly throughout life. As they are confronted with a musical problem or activity, they then draw upon this

information to assist in solving the problem or performing the musical activity.

3. Remembering Skills - These skills are strategies in which the student consciously stores information in long-term memory and retrieves it. Active practice in thinking will enhance the skill. Again, this is a skill basic to musical performance activities. The act of recalling music correctly during a performance requires extensive practice or rehearsal.

4. Organizing Skills - In using this skill, students collect information and begin to place it in a structure in which it can be more clearly understood and used in a learning activity. An example described later in the appendix is an instructional unit in recognizing and learning the instruments of the band and orchestra.

5. Analyzing Skills - When using this skill, students clarify existing information by examining parts and relationships. Typical activities in music instruction that utilize this skill are the study and analysis of form in music composition. Simple harmonic analysis is also an example common in upper grade music instruction.

6. Generating Skills - In using this skill, students connect prior knowledge to new ideas to construct a coherent organization of ideas. The application of this skill to music is not as clear cut as others discussed in this section. I view this skill as essentially hypothesis testing--a technique that could be used in creating musical compositions or solving a problem similar to developing a category system for identifying instruments of the band and orchestra.

7. Integrating Skills - These skills involve the pulling together of relevant parts or aspects of a solution. New information as well as

prior knowledge are combined as the student searches for an understanding of a learning task. When studying musical compositions for form, the student draws on prior experiences in analysis of music then fits this with the characteristics of the composition under study. The result is a firmer understanding of the composition's form.

8. Evaluating Skills - This involves the assessing the reasonableness and quality of ideas. In music instruction, students are encouraged to develop criteria for evaluating the quality of not only the musical performance, but also of the music.

Music Topics to be Selected

Numerous musical topics should be selected for the elementary music curriculum that will permit opportunities for students to practice and use higher order thinking skills. I would recommend the following:

1. Aural Recognition - Recognizing pitch, intensity, melody, harmony, rhythm, timbre, and duration.
2. Categorizing Instruments - Learning to recognize the various instruments and categorizing them by families (brasses, woodwinds, etc.).
3. Creative Projects - The opportunity to compose and improvise music. This could also include projects in building instruments and making musical games and puzzles.
4. Discussion - The opportunity to discuss and explore the students' feelings about music.
5. Dramatization - Use of plays to describe musical stories, recordings, and songs.
6. Experimenting - Trying a variety of sounds and techniques in creating music.

7. Harmonization - Learning to do simple harmonization of melodies - could be a part of creative composition and improvisation.
8. Interpretation - Opportunities in performing a variety of musical styles and performing through singing or playing instruments.
9. Musical Analysis - Studying the form, orchestration, and composition of music through the use of graphic call charts.
10. Reading Music - Developing the skills and knowledge necessary for effectively reading music at sight.

Levels of Importance

Because the time allotted to elementary music instruction is often minimal at best, it would be difficult to discuss the importance of content at three levels (ranging from not taught daily in every grade to taught daily 45-60 minutes) as Board of Discipline specialists were asked to do. It is most unusual to find schools scheduling music every day at all levels. The typical range is from no instruction to two or three days a week, 30 to 40 minutes per class meeting in grades 1-5. Kindergarten usually has no music or at a minimum, one meeting per week. An additional class, usually extra--curricular, is devoted to an upper grade elective choir program.

The content for this section will be discussed at two levels. The first will be viewed from the standpoint of a classroom teacher's instruction of music, a common procedure in many school systems. This will represent the "minimal" content. The second level will consist of the content recommendations as taught by a music specialist for two or three to five class meetings per week, 30 minutes for each class.

1. Minimal Content - The recommendations in this section are based on the content taught by a trained and capable classroom teacher. The amount

of time devoted to music instruction by a classroom teacher can vary widely. In some programs it is mandated, in others it is left to the discretion of the building principal or even the individual teacher. A music consultant may be involved in this situation to provide guidance, materials, and perhaps demonstration teaching. The recommendations for minimum content include the following:

a. Listening activities should include
   musical form
   musical sound characteristics
   instruments of the band and orchestra

b. Playing activities should include
   rhythmic reading
   understanding meter
   understanding the musical staff and notation

c. Movement activities should include
   moving to rhythms
   moving to various meters
   moving to various musical styles

d. Singing activities should include
   correctly singing rhythms
   correctly singing melody
   correctly singing meters
   understanding notation
   learning to use the voice correctly

2. Recommended Content - The recommendations in this section are based on the optimum scheduling recommended by the Music Educators National Conference. It is suggested that 9% of the total school instructional time or not fewer than 150 minutes per week, whichever is greater, be allocated to general music.[8] This content is based on instruction by a trained music specialist. The recommendations below are in addition to those listed for minimal content:

a. Listening activities should include
   learning to listen analytically
   learning the structure of music
   developing a repertoire of musical masterworks
   developing a repertoire of music from varying cultures
   writing simple notation

b. Playing activities should include
opportunities for creative endeavors
opportunities to improvise
opportunities to make simple compositions
learning to play simple classroom instruments (recorders, Orff instruments, etc.)

c. Movement activities should include
learning to express self through free movement
learning simple conducting gestures

d. Singing activities should include
developing musical independence
the opportunity to part sing
the opportunity to harmonize
the opportunity to sing canons, rounds

Content and Types of Students

Music of all cultures must be the basis of the general music program. At the core must be great masterworks of music of the past and present. This practice provides students with an opportunity to listen to, sing, and move to music that is central to our musical heritage. To balance and supplement this music, the curriculum must provide music of our pluralistic society: music of the Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, American Indians, Poles, and others. Included would be the elements of folk music and jazz inherent in many of the cultures mentioned. Teachers must be aware of the cultural makeup of their school(s) and further supplement their offerings to meet the interests and need of the students, e.g., if a portion of the enrollment is Asian, efforts must be made to use and perform music of that particular Asian culture. Parents and students may be called upon to assist in providing resources for this music.

The Elementary Curriculum as Preparation for Secondary Grades

The two levels of schooling in music, elementary and secondary, are very dissimilar in the contemporary American School. As previously indicated, music at the elementary level must be for all students. It should be an opportunity

to learn the nature of music and to participate in a variety of musical experiences. As a child moves from the elementary to secondary music at the middle and high school levels, music becomes more of an elective subject. Many middle schools do require music of all children, but it is usually a part of a sixth grade "exploratory block" scheduled for a term or part of a term. Required general music as practiced at the elementary level is rather uncommon in middle schools and virtually unknown in high schools. At the high school level, larger schools may offer elective classes in music theory, history, or humanities. The focus of music in the secondary schools is band, orchestra, choir, jazz ensembles, and solo-ensemble activities. The MENC reported in 1983 that the national percentage of participation in high school performance ensembles was 20.7% in band and orchestra and 17.6% in choirs.[9]

One could make the case that elementary general music is preparatory for the secondary performance program. Perhaps this is true in some school systems, but the larger view of the elementary experience is to provide a basis for the child to develop a life long understanding and appreciation of music.

What Content Should Not Be Taught

The only concern the author would express regarding content that should not be included in the curriculum is an over balance in the K-6 program of singing activities, particularly of a rote nature. This emphasis on singing does a mis-service to the students' understanding of the total musical experience. Such an activity is a reflection of the curriculum at the turn of the century. It has no relevance to our contemporary society.

What Teachers Should Know

The issue of teacher knowledge must be addressed from the standpoint of the music specialist. As described earlier, many school systems use classroom

teachers assisted by consultants for music instruction. Classroom teachers may have one or two (or no) classes in music fundamentals and methodology. Some states require a music class for certification. In states where this is not a requirement, individual colleges and universities may require course work.

An outline of the teacher competencies recommended by the Music Educators National Conference for those entering the profession is provided below and indicated with an asterisk.[10] These have been supplemented by my additional recommendations.

1. Instructional Competencies

Teach a lesson that illustrates knowledge of lesson planning.*
Conduct a rehearsal that demonstrates good rehearsal techniques and preparation.*
Teach or conduct a lesson that demonstrates effective classroom management.*
Teach or conduct a lesson that illustrates knowledge of a variety of learning needs.*
Teach or conduct a lesson that demonstrates vocal projection, appropriate grammar, self-confidence, and general deportment.*
Teach or conduct a lesson that demonstrates interaction with students in asking and answering questions.*
Pass a state or national teacher competency exam if required*
Have the ability and skills to motivate students.
Be familiar with a range of teaching styles and appropriate context in which they should be used.
Know a wide range of teaching strategies appropriate for use in effective general music teaching.

2. Musical Competencies

Perform a composition to demonstrate musical sensitivity.*
Perform in a secondary medium (piano, guitar, voice, classroom, or secondary instruments) in a teaching context of the positions being sought.*
Teach or conduct a lesson that demonstrates knowledge of music history, music theory, musical composition, and creativity.*
Teach or conduct a lesson that demonstrates how musical listening affects musical learning.*
Teach or conduct a lesson that illustrates the ability to hear musical performance problems and prescribe appropriate solutions.*
Pass a state or national subject-matter competency exam if required.*
Sing with accuracy and with a pleasing voice.
Have the ability to conduct clearly and expressively.
Have a familiarity with a wide range of musical compositions and songs of Western and non-Western sources, folk music, jazz, rock, and pop.

Have the ability to write simple compositions and arrange music.
Know the nature and construction of music, its form, and its style periods.

3. Personal Competencies

Demonstrate the degree to which professional goals have been determined.*
Demonstrate the nature of the commitment to teaching music.*
Show an understanding of the development of personal relationships with students, colleagues, administrators, parents, and community members.*
Demonstrate the development of a philosophy of music education.*
Set high expectations for student development and advancement.
Be familiar with current educational and musical trends.
Have a willingness to improve one's knowledge and skills as a teacher.
Have a willingness to constantly evaluate one's effectiveness as a teacher.

Recommended Evaluation Techniques for the Elementary Music Program

Individual student evaluation in elementary music can become a major administrative problem for the general music teacher. It is not unusual for a teacher to instruct 700 to 800 students weekly. The need to monitor student progress and to provide them with feedback must be carried out, even in a marginal manner. Music teachers, as others, are also required to provide periodic grade reports to parent and the school administration. One must treat the evaluation process as an aid to program improvement, not merely the end result of daily instruction.

Suggested evaluation techniques for the program are:

1. Knowledge - paper and pencil tests of music concepts and principles, puzzles, and games, and verbal monitoring of students in class.
2. Skills - listening tests of aural skills, evaluation of singing accuracy and voice, and if applicable, testing of recorder and Orff instrument skills.
3. Attitudes - student feedback on the music class and activities and evaluation of the teacher's instructional techniques.

The teacher, particularly the younger teacher, should maintain a program of self-evaluation throughout the year. Recommended techniques are the use of audio and videotaping of classes, rehearsals, and performances, observations by peers and superiors, and at least two evaluations yearly by the students.

Footnotes

[1]"Reform's Evaluation: New Directions Urged," Education Week, No. 32, May 4, 1988, p. 20.

[2]"Music Study and the Active Mind" (Reston, VA: Foundation for the Advancement of Education in Music, 1987).

[3]Robert J. Marzano et al., Dimensions of Thinking (Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1988), p. 17.

[4]R.M. Ennis, "A Taxonomy of Critical Thinking Dispositions and Abilities," In J. Baron and R. Sternberg (eds.), Teaching Thinking Skills: Theory and Practice (New York: Freeman, 1987), p. 25.

[5]J. I. Goodlad, A Place Called School (New York: McGraw Hill, 1984).

[6]Music Educators National Conference, The School Music Program: Description and Standards (Reston, VA: MENC, 1986), pp. 13-14.

[7]Marzano et al., Dimensions of Thinking, p. 69.

[8]MENC, The School Music Program, p. 24.

[9]Daniel V. Steinel, Music and Music Education: Data and Information (Reston, VA: Music Educators National Conference, 1984), p. 41.

[10]Music Educators National Conference, Music Teacher Education: Partnership and Process (Reston, VA: MENC, 1987), pp. 26-27.

APPENDIX

Analysis of an Elementary Music Topic

Topic: Recognizing the Instruments of the Band and Orchestra

Rationale: This is a topic central to all elementary general music instruction in the upper elementary grades. The outcomes of this topic have potential for transfer to adolescent and adult life as the individual becomes a participant and/or consumer of music. Of more immediate use is the topic's value as an introduction to beginning band or orchestra studies in grades four, five, or six.

Core Thinking Skill to be Used

Information Gathering

Facts, Skills, and Attitudes to be Achieved

1. Facts
   a. To know the various families and individual instruments:
      (1) woodwinds
      (2) brasses
      (3) strings
      (4) keyboard
      (5) tuned and untuned percussion
      (6) electronic (synthesizer)
   b. To know how the various instruments and families are used in band and orchestra scoring/composition.
   c. To know some basic performance skills of each family of instruments.

2. Skills

   a. Upon hearing an instrument, one should be able to recognize the tonal color of various woodwind, brass, string, keyboard, percussion, and electronic instruments.
   b. Upon hearing an instrument, one should be able to categorize the instrument within the appropriate family.

3. Attitudes

   a. To develop an appreciation for the skills of performing on an instrument.
   b. To wish to hear more instrumental ensembles live or recorded.
   c. To have an interest in playing an instrument in a later grade level.

Appendix (cont'd)

Teacher Competencies

1. A familiarity with instruments of the band and orchestra.
2. Performance skills on at least one instrument.
3. Knowledge of appropriate resources and materials for the topic.

Instructional Strategies

1. Formal Strategies

   a. observation: to build on student experiences and observations of bands, orchestras, and instruments.
   b. questioning: use of SQ3R (survey, questions, read, recite, review) technique in reading of handout/reading materials provided; use of reciprocal teaching to draw students into questioning and discussing instruments, their types, characteristics, and uses.
   c. group discussion: interaction between students and teachers about instruments and possible methods for categorizing.
   d. discrimination: discuss what makes instruments, unique, contrasting.

2. Informal Strategies

   a. hear recordings of instruments.
   b. view a videotape, film strip, or poster of instruments.
   c. hear individuals play instruments.
   d. hear a live performance of a band and/or orchestra.
   e. hear a conductor/composer discuss instruments as they are used in the band and orchestra.

Sequence of Unit

1. Study and discuss the nature of instruments.
2. Discuss possible methods for identifying instruments by sight and sound.
3. Discuss possible methods for categorizing instruments by unique and contrasting characteristics.
4. Develop a tentative system for categorizing.
5. Test system by a aural and visual test.
6. Discuss results of test, errors.
7. Revise tentative system.

Evaluation of Effectiveness of System Developed

1. Aural and visual testing.
2. Students' feedback on effectiveness of system.
3. Students interest in purchasing records, attending live performances.
4. Students have an interest in starting an instrument at a later time.

Appendix (cont'd)

Suggested Supplementary Instructional Materials

Bowmar, Meet the Instruments (poster, records, filmstrips, prints)

Janey, Know the Orchestra (book, records, filmstrip, prints, ditto masters)

Britten, Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra (record, filmstrip)

Music Master II (musical game)

Prokofiev, Peter and the Wolf (record, filmstrip)

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